DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 429 862 SO 029 400

AUTHOR	Holmes, Madelyn, Ed.
TITLE	Teaching Civics.
INSTITUTION	Council for Basic Education, Washington, DC.
ISSN	ISSN-0196-4984
PUB DATE	1998-06-00
NOTE	22p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Council for Basic Education, 1319 F Street, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20004-1152; Tel: 202-347-4171; Fax: 202-347-5047; e-mail: info@c-b-e.org
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
JOURNAL CIT	Basic Education; v42 n10 Jun 1998
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Citizenship; *Citizenship Education; *Civics; Educational Television; *Ethical Instruction; High Schools; *Integrated Curriculum; Interactive Television; Middle Schools; Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS	Civic Values; United States Constitution

ABSTRACT

The goal of civic education should be to develop competent, responsible citizens whose words and actions uphold and enrich the constitutional democracy of the United States. Being a good citizen requires proper knowledge, skills, and dispositions. This forum offers five articles: (1) "Educating Responsible Citizens" (Ivor Pritchard; Stephanie Soper); (2) "Participatory Civics Education" (Madelyn Holmes); (3) "Building Civic Awareness through an Integrated Curriculum" (David W. Monaco); (4) "Educational Interactive Television That Works" (Mary O'Connell); and an excerpt from a book, (5) "Teaching Morality" (Ivor Pritchard). (BT)

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Teaching Civics.

by

Madelyn Holmes

Council for Basic Education, Washington D.C.

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Vol. 42, No. 10 June 1998

BASIC EDUCATION

A Monthly For[illegible] Analysis & Comment

TEACHING CIVICS

"We the People" Competition

Students Focus on a Local Issue

A New Book about Moral Education

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Vol. 42, No. 10 June 1998

BASIC EDUCATION

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Funding for guest authors from the New York Times Company Foundation.

Basic Education is published monthly, except in July and August, by the Council for Basic Education.

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http://www.c-b-e.org
ISSN 1064984

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EDUCATING RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

From the earliest days of our democracy, participation has been a key to its success. It is true that not all could participate, even as ordinary citizens, in the beginning. The flexibility of the American democratic system is one of its key virtues, however, and this has opened the way to the system's self-improvement. Although full participation has not come without struggle or conflict, it has come, and come through legitimate means embedded in our founding documents and expanded as time, needs, and new understanding came to pass. Differences of opinion and conflicts have often divided us, but framed within our fundamental political institutions and principles they have also led to reforms in American society representing advances in the causes of equality and justice. An awareness of the historical development of American society and its political institutions is crucial to a full appreciation of what has been achieved to this point, and the direction of further progress.

The vitality of a democracy depends on people's making and maintaining a commitment to common goods and ideals. People willingly consent to support the political system through paying taxes, voting in elections, and fulfilling their civic responsibilities based on their recognition that other citizens will do likewise. This general support for our political institutions enhances everyone's rights and liberties, including freedom of religion and conscience, public safety, secure property, and the freedom to pursue a meaningful private life. Fulfilling our responsibilities as citizens creates the social conditions in which we can best pursue our own individual goals. Both the intrinsic value of direct participation and the resulting benefits of a lively and principled democracy are what make involvement in our democracy so important.

Democracies do not run themselves. Their political vitality depends on having knowledgeable, skilled, and dedicated people in every walk of life, not just those running the government. Constitutions and the political institutions they establish are important, of course, but much of what makes constitutions

and governments good or bad is how they enable citizens to use them for legitimate purposes. Everyone, whether they work for the government or not, must understand how and why the government has been organized the way it is, and what alternative means are available in democracy for solving various social and political problems.

Civic education should aim to develop competent, responsible citizens whose words and actions will uphold and enrich the constitutional democracy of the United States. Living as a good citizen requires informed thought and action and, therefore, depends on citizens possessing the proper knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Using standards that describe necessary knowledge and skills, educators can focus their lessons on what students need to learn in order to understand democracy and its relationship to a personal life as a good citizen.

Though an understanding of government is certainly useful in helping people learn how to wisely exercise citizenship in the United States, civics is not just a shorthand way of saying "courses in American government." Civics education imparts an understanding of important relationships among citizens, associations, civil society, and government. History and the broader examination of American society and culture are important to understanding the variety and complexities of American institutions, practices, and aspirations. People have to understand what it takes to run for the school board, serve on a jury, and form an opinion about the wisdom of current U.S. trade policy. They must also understand how to identify a local public need, and then how to use community resources and institutions to address those needs effectively. The various elements of good citizenship require a broad perspective on American public life.

This issue of *BE* includes articles about two curricular programs, one a national participatory program for high school students and the other an interdisciplinary local program for middle school students. In place of a regular book review, we have excerpted a section from a new book on moral education, *Good Education: The Virtues of Learning*, and have featured an interactive educational cable television program called COUNTDOWN.

– Ivor Pritchard and Stephanie Soper

Ivor Pritchard was the principal investigator of the Standards for Excellence in Education (SEE) project which condenses and edits the national academic standards in eight core subjects. These comments come from the introduction to the section for civics standards.
Stephanie Soper is now the principal investigator of SEE.

PARTICIPATORY CIVICS EDUCATION

by Madelyn Holmes

In an innovative civics education program, high school students grapple with such questions as: "Is what Alexis de Tocqueville called 'enlightened self-interest' enough to ensure that individuals will act for the common good?" "Is the right of trial by jury in civil cases an obsolete provision?" "Do recent efforts to shift functions from the federal government to state governments strengthen the position of states in the federal system?"

Classes study these topics and others and prepare testimony as part of the *We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution* curriculum administered by the Los Angeles-based nonprofit and nonpartisan organization, the Center for Civic Education.

"Is the right of trial by jury in civil cases an obsolete provision?"

For eleven years, the curricular program has provided more than 26 million students in grades 4 through 12 with the opportunity to gain knowledge about the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and relevant contemporary issues through participation in simulated Congressional hearings. The Center for Civic Education publishes a series of textbooks and instructional materials for classroom use in elementary, middle, and high schools as part of this civics curriculum.

The program's most public event, a competition held annually on Capitol Hill in Washington, is open only to high school classes who have been selected to represent their states at earlier contests held in Congressional districts and in state capitals. At the national competition, classes representing each of the fifty states prepare testimony on six topics and answer

questions before a distinguished panel of judges. This year's winner was John Calimano's class from East Brunswick High School in East Brunswick, New Jersey.

The simulated hearings take place over three days in May, and the ten classes who make it to the finals on the third day have become articulate, skilled spokesmen for their positions. In second place this year was a Florida class from Our Lady of Lourdes Academy in Miami, the school that won the competition last year, and in third place was a class from Centennial High School in Bakersfield, California. Besides these three states, classes from high schools in Illinois, Colorado, Oregon, Missouri, Michigan, New Mexico, and New York made it into the top ten. Administrators of the program at the Center for Civic Education admit that there is a corps of high schools who consistently do well in the competition. The teachers at these schools have integrated this program successfully into their regular government courses, and are convinced that this curriculum is a powerful tool for developing students' analytical, research, and public-speaking skills.

This curriculum is a powerful tool for developing students' analytical, research, and public-speaking skills.

John Calimano includes the *We the People* curriculum in his second-year, issues-oriented government course at East Brunswick High School. He has been teaching with this curriculum since it began in 1988, when his class won second place in the national competition. He was confident that this year's class of 27 students, divided into six teams of almost equal numbers of men and women, would do very well. "They had done so much research that I was convinced that they would be comfortable with just about any question that could be posed."

As in past years, he had devoted several months of class time to studying the forty lessons in the six units of the *We the People* curriculum. His students had taken the multiple-choice test provided by the Center for Civic Education, and they had won their state competition. As a result, all members of the class were knowledgeable about the philosophical and historical foundations of the American political system, understood the values and principles embodied in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and had acquired sufficient background information to support opinions about topical political issues.

In order to teach students to understand fully the workings of a democratic system of government, he seeks out curricular activities that offer students opportunities for participation. In addition to this program, his students take part in the Model Congress and the Model United Nations programs.

The *We the People* program has other attributes beyond its ability to engage students in participatory activities. Other educators have praised the intellectual depth of the textbook, noting that the historical coverage is more comprehensive than what is often presented in college-level political thought courses. At the national competition, students readily compared the concept of civic virtue in Rome with 1990s United States. They discussed the political implications of the capitalist economic system, and expressed reasoned arguments for and against judicial activism.

The Center for Civic Education promotes its program to foster civic competence and civic responsibility. It has been especially gratified that studies have indicated how students who have participated in the *We the People* program have become more interested in politics, have voted, and have become active local, state, and national citizens.

Dr. Madelyn Holmes is the editor of Basic Education.

BUILDING CIVIC AWARENESS THROUGH AN INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

by David W. Monaco

A clarion call has emanated from those associated with middle level education to engage students in learning that is both integrated by discipline and connected to the world in which students live. To pursue such a curriculum requires a flexible schedule and access to "real-world" resources which are often inaccessible to teachers because of a lack of time or money. A recent collaboration between an innovative program for middle school students and Raleigh city planners offers a model for a middle level curriculum and a solution to overcoming the obstacles inherent in its planning.

The project undertaken by Wake Summerbridge and the Raleigh City Planning Office has some clear messages for educators eager to enhance a civics curriculum or to initiate an integrated community-based curriculum. Bringing students into touch with their community and having them address significant issues heightens the meaning of their learning experience.

Wake Summerbridge is a year-round academic program for selected middle school students in Wake County, North Carolina. Its students, who attend the program tuition-free, represent 12 municipalities in the large rural/urban county and 13 ethnic groups. This diverse collection of students is identified for academic potential and a need for a tuition-free, three-year program of academic and interpersonal enrichment. Wake Summerbridge, which is a collaboration between the Ravenscroft School, an independent school, and the Wake County Public School System, offers students three summers of six-week institutes and two years of Saturday academies, personal mentoring, and community service options. The success of the Summerbridge model, now in operation in 37 cities nationwide, rests in its use of committed, energetic high school

and college students as teachers. Working closely with trained professional educators, these young people receive an initiation to curriculum planning, lesson development, and student assessment that often propels them into a teaching career after graduation from college.

Along with Wake Summerbridge's innovative structure, it has become a laboratory for several unique program components. Most notably, its summer academy has implemented a central curricular theme aligned with a prevalent community issue. In 1997, Wake Summerbridge established the theme of "Growth in the Triangle" as its centerpiece, capitalizing on the explosive population and building boom in the region. As the faculty of young people who would implement this curriculum did not arrive until June, program directors managed the preliminary planning for this unit. This process required extensive groundwork to uncover resources and eventually led to the doors of the city planning office.

Wake Summerbridge established the theme of "Growth in the Triangle" as its centerpiece.

Raleigh city planner, Dan Howe, organized a team of planners to meet with Summerbridge administrators during the spring of 1997 to consider ways the planning office could support the young people who would ultimately design and teach the "Growth in the Triangle" curriculum. It was decided to assign a planning coach to work with each of the five teams of four Summerbridge teachers as they developed curriculum for the six-week summer institute. In the meantime, planners began assembling a cache of materials, from census information to a wide variety of maps. During the week of orientation in June, the planning coaches met three times with the teaching teams to brainstorm ideas, exchange resources, and design lessons and project outlines. For our young teachers, this served as an excellent lesson in how to seek and apply resources from the community into their classroom. By the conclusion of the training week, each team of four teachers had established a strategy for integrating the theme of growth into their team's curriculum. The theme most clearly infused social studies classes, but it also appeared in literature, science, and math classes.

In social studies, teachers utilized a variety of resources such as newspaper articles, demographic statistics, aerial photographs, demographic pin maps, land use maps, population density maps, students' personal experiences, and community Internet sites to engage in hands-on analysis of this issue. Teachers focused on the reasons for and impact of demographic change in the area and developed a working definition of terms such as infrastructure, zoning, population density, and

urban/exurban/suburban. Specifically, individual classes focused on developing student awareness of their neighborhood and its place in the county, understanding the demographics of different county communities, assessing the economic and quality of life issues fueling business relocation, and even analyzing other cultures and immigration patterns as they related to growth in the Triangle. Students participated in mock city council meetings, visited local construction sites, met with city planners, analyzed maps, assessed demographic data, and related personal observations on growth in their neighborhoods.

In literature, teachers focused on works that used growth as a theme. Students read the book *In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson*, which details the adjustment of a young Chinese girl who moves to the United States in the 1940s. Her immigration story and typical adolescent experiences made growth, portrayed in personal terms, a readily accessible concept. Analyzing Walt Whitman's poem, "I Celebrate Myself and Sing Myself," or completing an activity in which students created their own time capsules presented both personal and community interpretations of the idea of growth.

In science classes, teachers developed experiments that highlighted applications of the growth theme. Students investigated ecosystems and explored genetics, cells, DNA, and other systems associated with human growth. Some classes studied air pollution, acid rain, and soil types, as they theorized about the potential impact of growth.

In mathematics, census and population data made for excellent resources as students constructed and analyzed a variety of graphs on computers. Other math lessons used blueprints and aerial photographs to introduce or teach concepts such as conversions, exponents, and slope intercept formulas.

In many cases, community resources will complement and sometimes replace textbooks. How much more realistic it is, for example, for a student to create her own population density map from actual statistics from her own neighborhood than it is to create a similar map as a review question at the end of a chapter. Students first described observations of growth in their own neighborhood before tackling the issue of zoning regulations in the Growth Triangle.

By working from their home out to the larger community, students more readily connected the impact of the issue of growth with their own quality of life. By looking outside of school walls to issues impacting the community, we can discover that civics is really synonymous with making our community a better place to live.

David Monaco is director of the Ravenscroft Middle School in Raleigh, North Carolina.

EDUCATIONAL INTERACTIVE TELEVISION THAT WORKS

by Mary O'Connell

COUNTDOWN, a live call-in television program designed to help students master fundamental math concepts, has been broadcasting to diverse student populations over free cable-access channels since 1990. Hour-long weekly programs have explored logic, perimeter, area, probability, estimation, graphing, integers, congruence, patterns, and more. Anecdotal reports of the program's popularity and efficacy have steadily increased, but recently, independent researchers tested 1,100 students in nine Chicago schools using math questions based on the Illinois Goal Assessment Program. Pre- and post-testing results indicated that students at the third-grade level improved their scores by 16 percent; students at the sixth-grade level improved by 13 percent; and students at the eighth-grade level improved by 7 percent. Just as striking as these statistical gains is the fact that viewers, callers, volunteers, and administrators involved with the program have developed a remarkable "I can do that" attitude about math.

The successful offshoot program, *Science Power,* anticipates equally compelling results. *Science Power* encourages "thinking like a scientist" by teaching and modeling the scientific method. Viewers and callers put the method to work as they participate in on-screen experiments at home. For example, in a lesson on levers, which is part of a series on machines and technology, the broadcast leaves students with one final experiment to conduct at home. Like COUNTDOWN, *Science Power* offers students a variety of ways to participate and garner positive feedback. Everyone who mails in a response ("You don't have to be right; you just have to try") is promised a packet of "really cool science stuff" by return mail. COUNTDOWN also sponsors win/win contests and games, and forwards math materials to participants.

In Chicago, as elsewhere, cable networks are required to allocate funding and air time for community programming as part of their franchising agreements. A handful of enthusiastic volunteers gathers each week at two "hotline" studios -- one in downtown Chicago and a second in suburban Skokie. The production is simple, involving two stationary cameras and a bank of telephones. The technical training for volunteers is minimal and provided gratis.

Because the broadcasts are local, the programs have a relaxed community feeling. On-air teachers are familiar with the neighborhoods and schools of callers, who identify themselves by first name, grade, and school. Callers can remain as anonymous as they wish, but as they work with master teachers who guarantee success, they become local TV "stars." The COUNTDOWN team maintains close contact with area schools, keeping teachers informed of upcoming program topics and providing tapes and free, reproducible instructional materials for distribution. School administrators are encouraged to congratulate specific students for spending additional time on math or science. The fourth-grade winner of a recent jellybean estimation contest was surprised the following day when her teachers and principal expressed pride in her accomplishment.

The programs have a relaxed community feeling.

On-air teachers are volunteers recruited from local schools. All have extensive background in their subject area as well as pedagogical expertise. Their easygoing warmth and enthusiasm are crucial to program success. Each show is devoted to a single concept using real world connections, direct instruction, and literature and games to illustrate practical math applications. Typically, two teachers team up to present different aspects of the selected topic. They provide a few minutes of introductory instruction and model the problem-solving process several times. Then the call-in number appears on screen, and teachers invite viewers to solve additional problems on the air. Students of all ages and instructional levels participate. It is impressive to hear tentative voices gain assurance as callers work through problems, guided and encouraged as necessary, by the on-air teacher.

Students apparently benefit whether they call in or work on their own as the COUNTDOWN experience expands by 30 percent their weekly exposure to mathematics content. Program tapes have also proven effective. Classroom teachers

and individual students can use them to reinforce skills. In a recent study, researchers used program tapes to teach third-grade students in a typical Chicago school (50 percent African American, 25 percent Hispanic, 20 percent White, 5 percent Asian). Two math lessons per week were presented using COUNTDOWN tapes, while a control group was formed in the third grade of a neighboring school. Using three different tests, the experimental group outscored the control group by 15 percent, 14 percent, and 6 percent.

COUNTDOWN and *Science Power* achieve programming excellence in large part because they tap into the educational expertise available at local universities. COUNTDOWN's founder and guiding spirit is Diane Schiller, professor of curriculum, instruction and educational psychology at Loyola University Chicago. Dr. Schiller helps the team organize program content and presentation, incorporating current mathematics pedagogy into every broadcast. Another Loyola professor, Dr. Dorothy Giroux, is a reading specialist who incorporates relevant language arts activities into the mathematics concepts presented each week. Cathy Thomas, a special education teacher in the Chicago public schools, contributes strategies for concept reinforcement, and COUNTDOWN producer, Mary Charles, a communications coordinator at Loyola University, prepares and distributes printed materials for teacher and student use.

In the April issue of *Basic Education*, Mary Grace Kantowski reported on a comparative study of mathematics education around the world, conducted following the disappointing showing by U.S. high school students on an international exam. Among other findings, Kantowski identifies the following factors as contributing to poor U.S. student performance: inadequate teacher preparation in subject areas, inadequate time allowed teachers for lesson planning, insufficient time devoted to math instruction and group work, and a failure to use problem-oriented instruction. These weaknesses are problematic at all levels, not just in high school. However, they are also precisely the deficits that COUNTDOWN broadcasts redress. Master teachers and educational experts join to prepare interesting, well thought out lessons that extend students' exposure to mathematical concepts and that employ a problem-oriented approach.

Dr. Mary O'Connell is a former English professor at George Washington University now living in Elmhurst, Illinois. For more information about COUNTDOWN, telephone Dr. Diane Schiller or Ms. Mary Charles at 847-853-3342.

TEACHING MORALITY

Good Education: The Virtues of Learning by Ivor Pritchard. Norwalk, Connecticut: Judd Publishing, Inc. and United Publishers Group, 1998. $24.95

Excerpted from Introduction

Schools in the twentieth century have had more time to spend on children's development than they used to, but other factors make it difficult for schools to focus on moral education. Educators have become consumed by the importance of academic achievement, which is now seen as the primary agenda of schooling. The large ratio of children to adults and the strength of peer influences also make it difficult for school educators to grapple with shaping the moral development of their students. One after another new immigrant population has arrived on American shores, and American leaders have become ever more inclusive in their toleration of religious and cultural differences. Such historical developments have made it increasingly difficult for public schools to retain a strong, clear commitment to a single moral code, particularly a religiously-based one.

In the twentieth century's early decades, concerns about immigrant children's values and whether all young people were adequately prepared for the unsavory temptations of modern life led to the character education movement. Through schools and other civic organizations, lists of positive personal traits were generated and celebrated, both in print and in ceremony. The traits, such as kindness, fairness, and reliability, were supported as either universally accepted or essentially American and thus beyond reproach. By having children read, write, speak and dramatize these values through codes of conduct and group activities, American society hoped to instill these qualities in the young, especially immigrant children, in the interest of preserving support for American values. Character education programs avoided explicit reference to religious doctrine, and so religiously-based moral education was limited to private schools, most notably the Catholic schools.

Later in the twentieth century followers of the philosopher John Dewey and the progressive movement promoted a different

kind of moral education. Believing that students needed to develop thinking skills to better understand the practical problems of an increasingly complex technological society, progressive educators sought to develop educational strategies to prepare students to approach real-life problems as scientifically literate and socially responsible citizens. Dewey viewed moral education from the perspective of a "...conception of the school as a mode of social life,...[in which]...the best and deepest moral training is precisely that which one gets through having to enter into proper relations with others in a unity of work and thought." Dewey argued that good schools should reflect the forms of social life of the society in which those schools are embedded, including the home, work, and democratic society. In such schools children's experiences would enhance development of the capacity to participate fully in modern society.

Dewey's writings remain influential in American education, although disagreements have always surrounded interpretations of his work. The direct moral emphasis of Dewey's philosophy of education has faded, apparently due to the vagueness of his ideas and the increasing emphasis on academic achievement in the standard core academic curriculum. However, Dewey's influence on moral education may still be found in efforts to cultivate values from within the child, and where a democratic consensus process is used to adopt moral values in classrooms.

In recent decades, educators have responded to the perplexities of American moral education with programs designed to address value-laden issues while avoiding any stance on specific moral issues. "Values clarification," an approach widely popular in American schools in the late 1960s and 70s, was supposed to help students realize, embrace, and act on their own values. Teachers led students through exercises designed to encourage students to become aware of their values while carefully guarding against the teachers' dictating the content of those values.

Another approach developed at this time went by the name of "moral development." Moral development was less widespread in schools, but attracted more attention from education researchers. Its goal was to improve students' reasoning about moral dilemmas, with little weight being attached to the content of students' conclusions about those dilemmas. The appeal of values clarification and moral development was that they tried to realize their respective goals while alienating no one. They did this by not taking a position on any controversial issues or imposing one person's values on anyone else.

While values clarification programs have nearly vanished, their viewpoint may still exist. American culture has always included a strong element of individualism, of people making their own independent judgments. If we take away the idea of

any substantive moral principles or ideals that people must acknowledge, it is not far from individualism to an essentially relativistic view of moral decision-making: Everyone should decide what's right for them, and no one should tell anyone else what to do. The popularity of values clarification may derive from this resemblance between moral relativism and the moral individualism that is woven into the fabric of American culture. People who still attack values clarification as a program are doing battle with a bogeyman, but the spirit of this debate may still be alive, because American cultural morality is still prone to a relativistic acceptance of individuals' moral convictions.

Ironically, American society's posture toward religion also may serve to reinforce moral relativism: Religious tolerance can encourage people to back away from any effort to criticize or call into question each other's religious beliefs, thereby seeming to accept their religiously-based moral viewpoints. This was part of the rationale for separating church and state in the U.S. Constitution, on the grounds that human reason cannot show how disputes between different religious doctrines should be resolved. Many Americans have come to see religion as a private matter, further insulating religious beliefs from public examination or discussion. Despite the antipathy of many religious Americans towards moral relativism and their belief in absolute moral principles derived from religious doctrine, both relativists and religious believers are covered by the same cloak of American tolerance.

In the last twenty years, with a cultural shift toward a more conservative climate in American society, an earlier form of moral education has enjoyed a revival. Today's most popular moral education programs have again developed around the teaching of certain core values, values that are promoted as entirely unobjectionable or as those of the community. These programs are often called "character education" just like the programs in the early decades of this century. Current character education programs promote roughly the same values as their predecessors. Many rely heavily on curricula and separate courses devoted specifically to their values, and some also seek to use research to shape the culture of the school so as to engender good behavior. The values themselves are often adopted through a formal process, in which the educators and members of the school community together decide what to put on the school's moral agenda. Many programs focus on the schools, but they also involve the local community, including such strategies as broadcasting public service messages on local television programs about selected values.

"Multicultural education" is another popular approach to teaching values to students. Multicultural programs aim to promote student understanding and appreciation for a diversity of

cultural values and practices, and are often integrated into the school's social studies curriculum. Multicultural education is also viewed as a response to academic failure and social misbehavior among American youth from particular racial or cultural backgrounds. Some multicultural education programs have been designed specifically for schools with a large proportion of African American students. Multicultural education's advocates hope that students will embrace the values of a culture they have specific ties to, instead of being offered values associated with American culture in general. Multicultural education programs include values drawn from various different cultures, typically the cultures from which the students in the program originated. These values are supplemented with principles of equality and tolerance between people of different cultures. Multicultural education remains an active force in moral education in the United States today.

With or without a specific program, today's parents and teachers must try to show children how to distinguish right from wrong. To succeed, these adults must possess an awareness of what is right and wrong, a sense of why it's right or wrong, and the ability to transmit their understanding. Moral education involves learning why standards of right and wrong are worth following, and developing the capacity to apply those standards.

The following chapters focus on education and the development of four moral virtues, namely, friendship, honesty, courage, and justice. The exercise of these virtues is justified as being an integral part of good ordinary educational practice. Anyone concerned with promoting excellence in education is thereby committed to promoting these virtues. The discussion begins with the relationship between parents and children, examines the activities and curriculum of the school, and then considers four contemporary social influences on education. Along the way, it elaborates on the fundamental concepts of morality, including the four virtues, and how they fit into educational practice at home and in school.

This book explains how parents and teachers can use moral concepts to clarify their own and children's understanding of the world's moral dimension. It also characterizes the teacher's moral authority in view of challenges to the teacher's role as a moral educator. Moral education is not easy, and conflict in moral education is not entirely eliminable. Social conditions may weaken or strengthen the practice of moral education, including political conditions, the market, religion, and race relations. Hopefully, the reader will acquire a better sense of how moral education may be practiced, and of why it matters to practice it.

Ivor Pritchard, Ph.D., wrote this book at CBE where he was a senior policy analyst from 1995 to 1997.

By the Way. . .

Since 1950, World Pen Pals has been promoting international friendship and cultural understanding between young people around the world through correspondence. The director of the program has written to CBE suggesting that teachers of students in grades 4 through 12 request a brochure for class participation by mailing a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: World Pen Pals, PO Box 337, Saugerties, NY 12477.

* * *

The U.S. Department of Education reports in a recent publication, *Student Participation in Community Service Activity*, that nearly half of students in 6th through 12th grade had participated in community service at some time during the 1995-96 school year. A majority (56 percent) of those interviewed reported that their schools in some way incorporated their community service into the curriculum.

* * *

In July 1995, the Council for Basic Education began work on a multi-year project called Standards for Excellence in Education (SEE). The project was designed to make recently-developed academic standards in the core discipline areas more useful to educators, parents, business leaders, and the general public and to pull together the basic elements of the standards to convey a coherent picture of a liberal arts K-12 education for all American students.

A group of CBE staff members has condensed, edited, and reorganized for uniformity the content standards in mathematics, science, civics, history, geography, the arts, English, and foreign languages. These revised standards will be published in a 200-page book, *Standards for Excellence in Education*. The book will be part of a "kit" which will include other products: a series of brief companion booklets, a series of charts containing all the standards, and a CD-ROM that will allow users to look at links among the standards and to pull up self-selected strands of subject matter.

CBE plans to release the *Standards for Excellence in Education* kit in late summer. We will be posting word of its release on our web page, at www.c-b-e.org.

–MH

Council for Basic Education

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